

No. 47. Man's fall by Adam and restoration by
Christ.

2d Cor. 5th Chap. 14th & 15th Verses.

The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead.

And that He died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.

He that should offer himself to rescue and deliver another, would be received not only into the arms, but into the heart likewise of him whom he intended to save. And if this be so with relation to a deliverer from temporal evils; how much more does the Saviour and Redeemer of us all from everlasting misery demand our utmost expressions of love, and the most perfect obedience? He hath saved us, when nothing but His Almighty power could save us: He hath put us into a capacity of avoiding death and destruction, which none of the sons of Adam could have avoided without this amazing instance of His love. Has

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ving ransomed our lives by the loss of His own, we must, with St. Paul, judge that if one died "for all," then were all dead; and as Christ did die for all, "it is most absolutely necessary that they who live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, &c."

In the following discourse it will be attempted to establish the truth of the Apostle's assertion, and shew that all men were dead—the necessity and happy effects of Christ's death—the great love that His death discovers to us—and lastly infer the equity of St. Paul's conclusion, that therefore we should not live unto ourselves, but unto Him who was the true cause of our great deliverance.

And first, Let us observe how all men were said to be dead.

The Scriptures acquaint us that there were two Covenants made with Adam, within the inclosures of the same Paradise; each answerable to the different condition He was in, the one of innocence, the other of sin. Man, the workmanship of God, whose essence

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is goodness, was, at his creation, innocent and good:
He was directed by the clearness of his understanding,
and enabled by the uprightness of his will to consult
his real interests. Whilst he remained innocent, he
was the image of his Maker, and Paradise was the
true pattern of Heaven. In this condition, God
enters into covenant with him;—which if he violates,
he must be liable to pass through the first death to the
second; through the chambers of the grave to the pit
of destruction.

Adam, forfeiting his innocence, not only cor-
rupted his own frame, but his corruption descended
likewise to his posterity. He that denies this corrup-
tion of his nature, must perpetually speak against his
own experience. As Adam's being said to be created
in the image of God, denoted his original purity; so
when he begot Seth, in whose posterity the Species was
to be preserved, the Holy Ghost particularly observes,
that "he begot him, in his own image, in his own
"likeness." It is indeed thought unreasonable by

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many that the whole race of mankind should be put into so deplorable a condition by the sin of one. But let such men consider, that tho' the reason of what God has done may be hid, yet it cannot be wanting. Let not His wisdom be arraigned at Our tribunal: it is sufficient for us that He hath declared it is so; and we may rest assured that infinite justice will do us no wrong. "Far be it from God to slay the righteous with the wicked! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" He that quarrels with this method of proceeding, may as well quarrel with the ordinary dispensations of Providence. For in the present state of things, one man may be the occasion of another's ruin, which mischief cannot be imputed to God, who designs the present establishment of things for the good of his creatures, but to those who pervert and abuse the wise order of them, to the misery of one another.

Now, tho' in this sense original sin may "deserve God's wrath and damnation," according to an Article of our Church, yet does He punish none

upon that account, but those, who, after all the assistance of His grace, proceed to the actual commission of sin: We may therefore safely conclude, that no man hath or ever shall suffer eternal death for the sin of Adam only. "The nature and property of our Almighty Creator is always to have mercy and to forgive." We had no sooner offended in our first Parent, but He offers us gracious terms of reconciliation.

I now proceed to shew the happy effects of Christ's death.

Such was the infinite love of God to fallen man, that He seems, as it were, obliged to make those the objects of His mercy whom his strict justice could not but continue under punishment. The second Person of the blessed Trinity was to satisfy justice, to obtain pardon, to rectify corrupt nature by the assistance of Grace, and to restore fallen man to the full hopes of his lost happiness. This second Covenant was made with Adam in Paradise, even at the time of his breach of the first: "The seed of the woman," says God,

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"shall bruise the serpent's head." Which covenant was repeated and more fully explained to Abraham—
"In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be
"blessed." Christ therefore came into the world and died for us, that He might free us from our enemies sin and the Devil. God declares, by virtue of Christ's death, in relation to His people, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness; and their sins and
"their iniquities will I remember no more. Thus by the death of Jesus Christ we are reconciled unto God, and are entitled to the forgiveness of our sins by faith in His blood.

Let us now see the great love that Christ's death discovers to us.

One token of Christ's love towards us was indeed that He laid down His life; but then the manner in which that was brought about does very much increase and enhance the value of His death. For He first parted with His glory, that He might be qualified to give His life. He stooped from the top

of Heaven, laid aside the majesty and felicity of God, and left the bosom of His Father, that He might atone and redeem lost mankind. He "who, was the " Son of the Highest, and thought it no robbery to be " equal with God; did yet, for our sakes, make Him- " self of no reputation, and took upon Him the form " of a servant."

Now that He should purchase us a just title to an immortal life at a price so inestimable, is, the more we reflect upon it, the more amazing instance of His inexpressible love. "He was numbered with the " transgressors," that we, who are really such, might become holy and just. This is such an instance of love as the most lively fancy could not conceive, nor the warmest passion describe. This was such a stupendous method of deliverance, and the deliverer so infinitely above the objects of His mercy, that nothing less than infinite wisdom could have suggested, and nothing less than infinite goodness undertaken such an expedient. He took the human nature, ineffable mystery! into

the divine; the former enabled Him to satisfy for humanity, and the latter gave value and merit to that satisfaction. Thus were we again brought into a state of favour and acceptance with our offended Maker by God himself. "Greater love than this hath no man, that a man lie down his life for his friends." This is most certainly the very height of affection.

Nor did our Blessed Redeemer undergo the torments of death upon account of any obligation mankind had laid upon Him. No! We were so far from obliging Him, that our sins had set us at perfect enmity to the Divine Nature. "Herein," says St. John, "is love; not that we loved God, but that He loved us." And St. Paul says, that "God commended His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

I now proceed to infer the equity of St. Paul's conclusion, that therefore we should not live unto ourselves, but unto Him, &c. &c.

What return, my Brethren, shall we make unto

the Lord for these amaxing instances of love? Let us all from this instant resolve to live no longer unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us, and rose again. We may as well suppose that affronts and injuries are the most suitable returns for the greatest favours, as that we are not absolutely obliged to serve our bounteous Creator for all His blessings, but more especially "for His inestimable love in the redemption of the world." Men require grateful returns for the favors they confer:—can the Sovereign of the world be expected to continue a friend to him who persists in disobeying Him? Did He give his Son to atone for the world when it lay in sin and misery, and will not those become unworthy of that amaxing love who do not live according "to the good pleasure of His will," but indulge the evil tendencies of their depraved affections? St. Peter tells us, that the reason "He bare our sins in His own body on the tree, is, that we being dead unto sin should live unto righteousness. He gave himself," says the Scripture,

"for His Church, that He might sanctify and
 "cleanse it—that He might present it to Himself
 "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that
 "it should be holy and without blemish." Ask thyself,
 O Sinner, if it be reasonable that Christ should suffer
 and die to "make us holy in all manner of conver=
 "sation," and thou shouldst live, not a life of justice,
 equity, and piety, but of deceit, dishonesty, and ungod=
 linefs? Did He "endure the Cross" that thou mightest
 break the fetters of Religion, and trample on the bonds
 of Restraint? He died—but it was to keep us from
 dying, and to make us alive unto God.

And "what doth the Lord our God require of
 "us" but what is suitable to our nature as men, and
 to our happiness as Christians? If He hath pur=
 chased our pardon, and sealed it in His own blood;
 if He requires no more of us than that we should be=
 lieve and obey the Gospel, how ungrateful must we ap=
 pear to ourselves to live in direct opposition to His
 precepts? Imagine therefore, O sinner, when thou art

tempted to the commission of sin; imagine that thou
 seest thy Blessed Saviour in the night before His
 passion, when His body was already drowned in tears
 of blood, and His soul heavy to the death; imagine
 that thou seest Him hanging on the Cross; His
 body wounded with the nails and spear, and His
 soul pierced deeper by thy sins and the sense of God's
 wrath, and then applaud thyself for thy gratitude
 in casting off His easy yoke! Resist his love, if thou
 art able, whilst thou considerest his arms open to em-
 brace thee! But if thou art so obdurate as to withstand
 such instances of affection—behold Heaven and Im-
 mortality, to draw thee to His service, if His suf-
 ferings on earth be not sufficient. And if all this
 will not constrain thee "to live unto Him," hear the
 Prophet's cry out, "Hearken, O Heaven, and give
 "ear, O earth, the Lord hath nourished and brought
 "up children, and they have rebelled against Him."
 And remember, at the same time, that this same
 Jesus, who was born for thy sake, who lived a painful

life, and died an ignominious death, and now sits upon His Throne, shall shortly appear to punish thee according to the demerit of thy actions. These considerations do infinitely concern us—of which we shall one day, I pray God it may not be too late! be thoroughly sensible. There is but a little while, and He that is now our Saviour, shall come to be our Judge. Let us then, as we desire to be happy, let us, whilst we have opportunity, redeem the time past by living less to ourselves, and more unto Christ; and God grant we may henceforth so carefully live unto Christ, that we may die in Him! May this be our principal care and concern! And may the Almighty, by the influence of His Grace, constrain us to live unto Him who died for us and rose again.

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

Theoph^{us}. J. St. John.

